

# rs. Blake's hanksgiving


dear me, suz! If that hain't too  
Mrs. Betsey Blake cried in al-  
tearful vexation as she stepped  
yard from the stove and with a  
face regarded a thin stream of  
trickling from a crack low down  
side of the wash boiler and  
ering into a cloud of steam on the  
ove. "John," she called in a voice  
trouble, "the b'ller's leakin' like  
an' it looks as if just nothin' short  
inker could stop it."  
husband came into the kitchen  
the woodshed at a leisurely pace  
with an air of confidence in his  
y to cope with any number of  
boilers. But as he examined the  
lar fissure his face took on a puz-  
and then a more serious expres-  
aybe you might stick a rag into  
e suggested.  
o, not in such a shaped hole as  
she said decisively and began  
ng the water out into a pail.  
've got to take it to the village  
have it soldered, an' that's all  
is about it. I'll just spoil the  
so I can't wash afore tomorrow.  
hat'll put back my Thanksgiving!  
Hain't it too bad? Dear me, I  
wish we hadn't asked father an'  
er an' Abigail to come."  
Well, I'm sorry it's happened so, but  
r mind. You'll fetch things round  
ght. You gen'ally do," said he, so  
idently that her spirits rose above  
resent disappointment.  
can do some of tomorrow's work  
y an' be so much ahead," she said,  
before he was on his way she had  
a pumpkin pared and stewing in  
place of the boiler.  
ext morning the mended boiler was  
stated. By noon the delayed wash-  
was completed, and Betsy Blake  
ed out complacently from her be-  
d dinner upon the long array of  
less clothes fluttering from the  
ying line like triumphant banners.  
the afternoon a part of the ironing  
done, and the next morning she



WO WHOLE DAYS AFORE THANKSGIVIN'  
TO GIT GOOD AN' 'READY IN.'  
e refreshed and with a sense of re-  
from one great labor of the week.  
There!" she exclaimed, sitting down  
a moment's rest after clearing the  
akfast table, washing the dishes and  
eeping the kitchen. "Thank good-  
s, washin' day is over an' some of  
e ironin' done, an' now it's only Tues-  
y, with two whole days afore Thank-  
in' to git good an' ready in."  
Hey? What?" John asked abstract-  
y, with his eyes on the columns of  
last paper, absorbed in an editorial  
the Philippines.  
Two more days afore Thanksgiv-  
Betsy repeated.  
Why, yes; so there is," said he, look-  
up at the clock as if for confir-  
mation. "I was kind of thinkin' this was  
Wednesday, but couldn't make it seem  
at right."  
Of course it's Tuesday, for I washed  
esterday," said she, with convincing  
urance. "An' now I'm goin' to make  
cram'b'y sassa an' my mince an' ap-  
ples. I shall leave my pumpkin pies  
tomorrow, for I want 'em fresh.  
his afternoon you'd better kill the  
key an' dress him, so he'll have a  
od long spell to hang. They're heaps  
ter so than they be to fly into the  
en. An' then tomorrow you can git  
as an' go arter your load of wood.  
obby you can git two."  
As John Blake drove his lumber wag-  
along the road the next morning on  
way to the wood lot he noticed that  
indolent atmosphere seemed to per-  
de the few farmhouses which he  
eased, but it only impressed him as  
rather early sign of the coming holi-  
y.  
He found Silas Day cutting firewood

at his door, looking somewhat surpris-  
ed at his appearance and more so at  
the request to go to the woods.  
"Why, yes, I s'pose I can go an' help  
you a spell," he answered, "arter I cut  
Phebe a speck more wood. She'll want  
consid'able today."  
"Yes, gettin' ready so for Thanks-  
givin'." Betsy is, too; busy as a bee  
in a tar barrel."  
Presently they were jolting over the  
rough byroad, too much shaken for  
comfortable conversation until they  
came to a halt in the quiet of the bare  
November woods.  
"I don't hardly see how you come to  
put off gittin' your wood till today,"  
said Silas, looking up through the net-  
ted branches at the climbing sun.  
"Well, I had a lot of things to tend  
to an' couldn't get roun' to it. I s'pose  
I might ha' waited till arter Thanks-  
givin', but thought I might as well git  
it afore."  
Silas stared at him and muttered,  
"Runnin' pretty clus to the wind, I  
should think."  
After they had plied their axes  
awhile John stuck his into a log and  
going to his coat, drew a package from  
a pocket.  
"I always did relish victuals in the  
woods, an' so I fetched along some  
bread an' meat. Let's set down an' take  
a bite."  
"Well, I can most always eat," Silas  
assented as he took his allotted share  
and sat down beside his companion,  
munching the bread and meat and let-  
ting his eyes rove about as people are  
apt to do when eating out of doors.  
A company of chickadees were busy  
gathering their slender fare on a low  
branch before him, and on a higher  
one a red squirrel began rasping a but-  
ternut.  
"Eatin' their Thanksgiving dinner,"  
Silas said, nodding at the little ban-  
queters.  
"Make 'em a tolerable long meal if  
they keep it up till tomorrow arter-  
noon. Hush! What be they ringin'  
the meetin' house bell for?" John asked  
excitedly as the mellow tones of a  
church bell were wafted to their ears.  
"Why, don't they always?" Silas  
asked, glaring curiously at his com-  
panion.  
"Why, Silas, you know they don't  
never, only Sundays an' fast days an'  
Thanksgivin', except funerals, an' there  
ain't nobody dead, not as I know of."  
"Look a-bera, John Blake," said Sil-  
las, "be you crazy or be you foolin'?"  
You act all the time as if you was  
makin' b'lieve this wa'n't Thanksgiving'  
day, sot by the gov'nor an' beln' kep'  
by everybody but you an' I. Now, quit  
your nonsense an' let's hurry up, for I  
want to git home. We hain't got no tur-  
key, but Phebe had three as neat chick-  
ens as ever you see all ready to go into  
the oven when I come away, an' the  
children's all goin' to be there, an' I  
want to be on hand to rights."  
John's face grew blank. His eyes  
stared, unseeing, into space.  
"Good gracious, Peter! If Betsy an'  
me hain't done it!" Then, springing to  
his feet: "Hurry up! I should say! Most  
noon Thanksgiving' day, Betsy's father  
an' mother an' sister-a-comin' an' the  
turkey a-hangin' up in the cellar, if  
she's kep' a-dreamin' as long as I have.  
It all came of that plaguey ole wash  
b'ller springin' a leak Monday, so she  
couldn't wash till Tuesday, an' we  
counted from that. Never mind the tar-  
nail wood. Onhitch the h'oses an' let's  
scot!"  
Five minutes later the team was tear-  
ing down the road, the bounding wagon  
sending far and wide its thundering  
echoes that brought forth alarmed in-  
mates from many a farmstead, while  
Silas hung on for dear life, as disjunct-  
ed pleas and protests were jolted from  
him, all unheeded by the reckless  
driver.  
Deacon Adams in his Sunday suit,  
less the coat, was standing in the midst  
of his Sunday dressed household with  
an open letter in his hand and disap-  
pointment on his face that was repeat-  
ed in various degrees in the faces of his  
family. Hearing the unwonted d'n, the  
deacon rushed forth to ascertain the  
cause.  
"Stop, stop! Hold on!" he cried, run-  
ning out into the road, and John, im-  
patient of delay, drew rein.  
"What on this livin' s'nirk, John, is  
the matter? Is somebody sick or have  
you bin takin' more'n you'd ought to?"  
"No; there hain't nobody sick, an' I  
hain't bin a-drinkin'," said John, and  
he rapidly set forth the awkward situa-  
tion.  
"You wait a minute, and I'll fix you  
up right as a rive," said the deacon,  
still restraining his impatient neighbor.  
"I'll lead you a turkey all roasted and  
ready to go ont' the table. I'd livers'n  
it, and so would Mis' Adams. You see,  
we invited my brother Iry and all his  
folks, and we'd got two rousin' big tur-  
keys in the oven and half roasted,  
when there come a letter from 'em say-  
in' how Iry'd up and broke his leg, and  
they wouldn't none of 'em come. I  
don't want to be eatin' cold turkey for  
a week arter Thanksgiving', and it's  
providential 'at youn missed fire."  
Suitable provision was made for the  
safe transportation of the hot turkey  
the short distance, and John Blake  
went his way with it relieved in spirit.  
Meanwhile Betsy had spent half the  
forenoon leisurely preparing for the  
morrow's festivity, glad to be unembar-  
rassed by the presence of men folks  
and uninterrupted by any visitors until  
a timid rap called her to the door, and

she opened it to Silas Day's little  
daughter.  
"Why, Mandy, is this you? Is there  
anything the matter to your house?"  
Betsy asked in evident surprise.  
"No, ma'am; yes, ma'am, I mean,  
some matter," Mandy stammered. "The  
cat got int' the buttry an' eat up a  
whole punkin pie, all but the crust, an'  
ma wants to know if you can't lend  
her one, 'cause there ain't enough left  
to go round."  
"A punkin pie? Come in an' set  
down. Why, I hain't got none baked."



"WHY, MANDY, IS THIS YOU?"  
Wain't goin' to till this afternoon.  
Your ma can have one tomorrow, an'  
I s'pose that's what she wants it for."  
Mandy stared at her, round eyed and  
open mouthed. "No, ma'am, she wants  
it today."  
"Well, she can't have it of me afore  
night. How comes it you hain't to  
school?"  
"The hain't no school today."  
"Hain't no school? Is the school-  
ma'am sick?"  
"No, ma'am; she went home to  
Thanksgivin'."  
"What! Lose two whole days for  
Thanksgivin'? That's ridicle'ous," Mrs.  
Blake declared with emphasis.  
"Why, no; she's comin' back tonight  
or in the mornin'."  
"An' not keep Thanksgiving' in her  
own home? That's ridicle'louser."  
"Why, Mis' Blake, she's keepin' it to-  
day at her own home," said Mandy,  
staring with still wider eyes at her  
hostess. "This is Thanksgiving' day!"  
"It hain't!" Mrs. Blake made this  
assertion stoutly, but she was begin-  
ning to feel sickening qualms of doubt.  
"It sartin is, Mis' Blake, 'cause ma's  
roastin' three chickens an' we're all  
to home, an' oh, my, you'd ought to  
smell it to Deacon Adamses as I come  
by!"  
"My land o' goodness!" the poor wo-  
man gasped, sinking into a chair in  
complete collapse as the mistake be-  
came undeniably evident. "I've skip-  
ped a day, I do b'lieve. It all come o'  
that mis'able b'ller leakin' so't I  
couldn't wash Monday."  
The rumble of wheels caught her ear.  
She cast an appalled glance out of the  
window. "And there, if there hain't  
mother an' father an' Abigail a-drivin'  
up this minute, an' the turkey not  
singed nor the stuffin' made nor a  
punkin pie made! Thank goodness,  
tain't his folks! There's mince an' ap-  
ple pies enough. Mandy, you git one of  
each kind an' take 'em home. But  
what shall I do?"  
She put on a brave face to mask her  
mortification as she went out to meet  
her guests, whom she wished to see  
away in spite of her longing to see  
them. But when she invited them in  
to the unready house and tried to make  
a joke of her mistake and saw the  
look of disappointment steal over the  
faces of her sharp set travelers her  
feigned laughter broke into genuine  
sobs.  
Just then John Blake suddenly ap-  
peared in the midst of the depressed  
group bearing the borrowed turkey  
which in the nick of time made a joke  
of the mistake and turned fasting to  
feasting.—Forest and Stream.

**President Lincoln and Thanksgiving.**  
It was President Lincoln who restor-  
ed Thanksgiving day. In 1863 the regu-  
lar Thanksgiving custom began, and  
the last Thursday in November has  
since been one of our national holidays.

**Thanksgiving.**  
Who murmurs at his lot today?  
Who scorns his native fruit and bloom  
Or sighs for dainties far away?  
Besides the luscious board of home?  
—Waltier.

**Mr. Turkey's First Appearance.**  
The real origin of Thanksgiving as  
a day specially set apart for prayer  
and rejoicing must be attributed to  
Governor Bradford, the first governor  
of Massachusetts colony. In gratitude  
for the plentiful harvest in 1621, fol-  
lowing upon a period of great depres-  
sion, he proclaimed a day of thanks-  
giving to be observed on Dec. 13 (old  
style) of that year. Four men were  
sent out in search of game. They re-  
turned loaded down with wild tur-  
keys. Thus did the great American  
bird make his first appearance.

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